if i sleep, could it cost me my world?

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by Averie_sol

Summary

Leo cant stop thinking about how close his brothers came to dying. All the specific ways in which their lives could have ended. He needs to be awake to make sure it doesnt happen.

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based on a mutant mayhem headcanon i have that the boys had to force leo to sleep after the invasion and raph didnt leave his side (because their red v blue trauma has FINALLY BEEN HEALED THEY BROKE THE FIGHTING CYCLE)

another sleepless nights fic!

Notes

uhhhh death?

nobody ACTUALLY dies.

i love the mutant mayhem boys theyre so cute

See the end of the work for more notes

New York was safe.

All his brothers were patched up, healing, not in pain, on the mend, sleeping.

His entire family was alive and resting.

He was safe, and comfortable, in his bed.

So why wasn't leo asleep like everyone else?

Sure, he struggles with sleeping. Its nothing new, he usually only gets five consecutive hours of sleep before something wakes him up, or by the time he actually gets to unconciousness.

And the battle had finished so long ago, like almost over a day! His brothers had slept for hours, twice already, yet leo still cant seem to let himself close his eyes.

Hes so *exhausted*.

Hes not sure if its some deep rooted trauma created insecurity of him thinking he isnt allowed to sleep, doesnt deserve to sleep and rest and heal his horribly cracked and mangled body. That all he had done is proven how much of a horrible leader and brother he was, getting all his family hurt and almost destroying the humans because he failed. If april hadnt hijacked that news report, then humanity would have totally been ruined and his brothers... dead.

Leo would have killed his brothers.

That isn't a thought he wants to dwell on for too long though, hes self aware enough to know how absolutely illogical it is to blame himself. But he just cant help it. Trying not to think about things makes him think about them more.

Hes already checked every entry and exit of the lair forty times, having to do an extra two because by the time he counted he realised he had only checked a total of thirty-eight times, and obviously he just had to round up and keep going.

Theres the possible reason that its just insomnia like usual. His brain not slowing down no matter how exhausted he is, his thoughts just whirring and whizzing as if he isnt so tired he might just drop dead. But he knows thats not true, because hes not letting his eyes droop shut for even a second.

Maybe he cant sleep because even after almost twenty-four hours, his body and mind are still in shock. Flight or fight mode.

He needs to be awake, because what if the threat wasnt actually stopped? What if there was another mutant who also absolutely loathes the human race as a whole? He has to be able to keep his family safe, to keep his brothers safe.

Leos scared. Hes so fucking terrified.

God, hes in so much pain. He had lied, badly because he cant lie, and then bolted (wobbled cripledly) away when anyone asked him if he needed pain medication. So maybe it was the pain keeping him awake, the seering in his shell, the painful ache of all his nearly but not quite broken bones. The stabbing of guilt, of anger, of sadness, of fear--

"Leo?" He could see all of it, still feel all of it. He could hear his shell cracking, his brothers shells cracking. The screams of everyone around him.

He could vividly see all the ways his brothers could have died, could die.

"Leo," maybe the threat wasnt gone. He knows thats also illogical, because hes not a true deep, catastrophic, over thinker if he doesnt consider every possible angle. But actually, what if? What if what if what if what if what if? He had to be ready--

"*Leo*," his eyes jumped to his brother, who was sitting infront of him on his bed, holding his hand.

When donnie saw the blue turtles eyes focus on his, he sighed, eyes calculating and worried. "Are you okay dude? I thought you would still be dead asleep right now, since you were patched up last and everything, you didnt get to sleep or anything like we did..." donnie trailed off, brows furrowing.

Leo swallowed thickly, "did I wake you?" He asked, voice just above a whisper. He already felt so guilty, and now he had awoken the youngest.

He could feel himself start to shake lightly, tremble and shiver almost, but he couldnt move at the moment. His brother was holding his hand.

"No, I woke up and needed to pee. I came back in and saw you were awa--" Donnie was interupted by a groan, both cool toned turtles turning to see raph sitting up in his bed. "What the hell guys, why are yous awake?"

"I got up to pee, I was just seeing if leo was okay," donnie explained, watching as his older brother looked worriedly towards the eldest. "What? Why wouldn't leo be okay?" He asked quickly, legs hanging off the bed as he watched the turtles infront of him.

"Whose no' okay..?" Fuck, okay. Great, this is great leo. Now all his brothers are awake and arent resting, awesome, best brother of the year award goes to--

"Everyones okay mikey," the blue turtle quickly assured, repressing the urge to wince when the younger climbed down from his bed. Acknowledgement made everything all too extra overwhelming.

"Then why are yous all awake?" He asked confusedly, scanning his brothers for answers.

"I woke up to pee, and was asking leo why he was awake, and then raph woke up and now YOU'RE awake," donnie explained, hands flailing around gently.

Mikey climbed into leos bed, a worried look on his face. "Bro you look like you havent slept at *all*," he pointed out, face falling at the way leo simply looked down at his bed sheets. Why couldnt they just go back to sleep and leave him be?? Why do they have to make a big deal out of it--

"You have slept atleast a little bit since the attack, right leo?" Donnie questioned, letting the elder take his hand from his.

Fuck.

Leo felt his breath hitch, throat aching in a painful way that could only mean one thing.

"Why the fuck havent you slept?!"

"Raph!" Donnie scolded, voice squeaking as he glared at his red clad brother. "Dont be so loud."

"Im sooooo *sorry* but leo literally hasnt slept at all and he looks like hes about to drop dead!" raph counters, glaring.

"Yea he does but yelling isnt gonna help!"

"Uh, guys--"

Leos lip quivered and tears dribbled down his cheeks, breath coming out irrhythmically. His brothers were talking about him like he wasnt here. They were being all shouty like he was in trouble, like they were in trouble, like they were in *danger*.

"H--hey, leo its okay. You just need to sleep, yea?" Donnie let out awkwardly, not touching his brother.

Leo doesnt cry, ever. This is *weird*.

"I--I c--*aan't*" leo blubbered out, crying loudly.

Raph got off his bed immediately, climbing into leos and taking a seat infront of him.

"Breathe," he instructed, eyes hardened.

The red clad turtle was probably the only one out of their brothers to see leo cry since they were small, the twins often sticking together. Leo helped raph, but rarely let his twin return the favour.

It made the red turtle angry on more than one occasion, because leo would always rather deal with it on his own rather than accept help.

But he was *trying* to be patient. He owes it to him after all the years of bullshit.

He loves his brothers afterall, and leos never done anything to not deserve love in return.

"I--I--I--" leo hiccupped, unable to form any words the others could comprehend through his messy tears.

He then shut his eyes, and raph wasnt sure if he'd be able to do *anything* to help. He quickly reached for the blue turtles hands, knowing the next thing coming was probably something erratic, maybe violent.

Leo may be mr rule follower, but hes still raphs twin.

"Leo youre *fine* just breathe. Dont speak, dont think, just breathe." The red turtle was mostly just reciting things hes told by leo all the time when he gets too angry and doesnt have an outlet for it, falling into a panic attack.

Leos pouty lip was wobbling, tears flowing down his face as he tried not to cry loudly. Everything hurt so much; his head, his shell, his arms, his legs, his *heart*.

"Squeeze my hands and breathe, dont be a moron," raph said lightly, voice still low and gruff from only just waking up a few minutes ago.

Leo squeezed, and tried to breathe. He ignored everything around him, attempted to ignore his thoughts, and opened his eyes to look at his brothers while sniffling. Tears still trickled out of his eyes, but he didnt seem nearly as hysterical as a few minutes ago.

He didnt know what to do. He knows his brothers are right here, that his family is right here and everyones safe and content and whatever but he cant get the endless amounts of images showing him their deaths out of his mind. They wouldnt go away, and the more he tried to think about something else, the more he thought about not thinking about it which led to him *thinking about it--*

Mikey had been dismembered, donnie crushed and ripped and smeared across the ground, raphs shell cracked revealing his insides, splinter impaled, april suffocated by the force used to hold her to the ground, blood everywhere, guts everywhere, open dead eyes staring him in the face before finally it was his turn-

Leo *chirped*. A very small, sad sound that the others werent used to coming from the leader. He would go non-verbal sure, but he would just go completely silent. No animalistic noises in hearing range.

God, their poor brother must be running purely on sleep deprived delirium.

"Now that you're not actin' batshit, why havent you slept since that whole crap? its been like over a day," raph asked, keeping his firm grip on leos hands.

The eldests lip quivered dangerously close to another hyperventilating episode, but he didnt fall back down into that hole. His tears merely continued to fall.

He saw what the others didnt.

"Whuh-- what if the--theres still danger?"

His brothers hearts fell; of course leo was experiencing anxiety because of the invasion, why didnt they think to make sure he hadnt wound himself up?

Both cool coded brothers were autistic, but it was leo that got the severe anxiety side of the spectrum. Donnie flowed through daily change like any typical person, of course needing some things to stay in order.

But leo? Leo was awful with change. Horrid with any kind of disruption to his normal. They all knew it.

"Lee theres not, superflys gone," mikey spoke up, smiling comfortingly at the older.

"Mikeys right," donnie started, grabbing the leaders attention. "And theres no one else, everythings okay," he said, matching his brothers smile and both the younger two giving a thumbs up. They wanted nothing more than to hug him right now, squeeze away the doom spiralling out of him, but they werent too sure if that was a good idea at the moment.

"Buh--but wha' if there *is* ?" leo countered almost immediately, breath hitching as he hiccupped repeatedly.

Raph was just as quick to reply, not wasting a second, "there *isnt*," he promised.

"But what if there is? I--I *c--cant* sleep, im not allowed to. If--if i sleep then i wont know, and if i dont know then you guys will be in danger and you'll die and it'll be all my fault and then *i'll* duh--die--" mikey and donnie stared with wide eyes, alarmed by the sudden fixation on death.

Anxiety in the blue turtle was obvious, clear as day, but he was never so distraught in such a calm environment.

Raph wasnt as bothered, still concerned but not surprised. Hes heard late night "you're gonna die I'm gonna die we're all gonna die" babbles from leo more than once, usually late nights to dad and hes snooped or gone and tried to help. The eldest had a worrying reoccuring thought of death and catastrophe swirling around in his head all the time, but raph guessed that just came with the servere anxiety.

"You're being a nutjob. Stop focusing on dying. We're *safe*," raph assured, eyes furrowing when leo shook his head.

"I *cant*," the blue turtle sobbed, staring down at his lap. He wanted to curl up in a little ball and hide away, or be like batman, protecting from the shadows; alone.

Leo was so embarrassed, hes so *embarrassing*! He cant believe hes being so... so... so problematic right now, acting so discomposed infront of his little brothers.

He wants to stop acting this way, but he cant, because hes so scared they're all going to die and--

"I--I don' wan' yuh--you to die," leo wept hysterically, anxiety unable to be swayed by his brothers reasoning.

He knows logically theyre right and he is acting like a nutjob, but he had never been more terrified than he was and that feeling was still plunged deep in him.

Mikey, gently but still with enough force so leo knew it was a hug, wrapped his arms around his brother to try and offer some kind of comfort. "We're not going to die leo. Remember what dad always said? Nothing bad can happen to us down here," he attempted to reassure, calling it a win considering the older didnt shove him off.

But leo still didnt seem convinced, whining and blubbering incoherently while his breath shuddered through tears.

They sat quietly, comforting leo and waiting for him to calm down enough for them to be able to have a proper conversation with him. And he did, eventually, because there were only so many tears he could cry.

"You need to sleep leo," donnie said gently, grimacing when the blue turtle just shook his head.

"I--I cant. I cant, I do--dont..." leo wept, unable to verbally explain his fear, the bottomless hole in himself where his self-worth was supposed to be.

"You're just real anxious and wound up, everythings okay," mikey tried to reason, pouting when leo sniffled.

"I know..." he whined quietly, hiccuping pathetically.

"Then why haven't you slept?" donnie asked gently, no judgement evident in his tone, just pure confusion and concern.

"I cant..."

Raph sighed and growled lowly, they werent getting anywhere and as much as leo said he couldnt sleep, he needed to. Hes just surprised his twin hadnt passed out from sheer exhaustion or pain. His shell was cracked, he was the only one knocked unconcious with a severe concussion, and he had several almost broken bones like the others.

"Don go wake dad, tell him whats goin' on and that leo needs anxiety meds," raph said, telling him to ignore when leo tried to protest.

"D--don' ge' dad he--he--he," leo sniffled, tears returning. He didnt want to cause any more problems, he just wanted to fix them and make sure there werent anymore.

He *needs* to make sure everythings okay.

"Hes fine bro, its you we're worried about," mikey assured sympathetically, watching as raph rubbed smooth and consistent circles into leos palms. The red turtle made sure he was applying significant pressure, but not too much, just so it didnt hurt.

"You haf'ta sleep." Raph wasnt overly amazing at the whole comfort thing, he just tried to be honest and make his voice a little less harsh than it usually was, hoping for the best.

Before leo could blubber out more protests, donnie has returned with their dad, eyes wide with concern. They softened at the sight in front of him; his boys.

"Leonardo," splinter started gently, walking over to his bed and inspecting his son.

He smiled sympathetically, "sweet blue, I promise everything is okay. You need to rest so that you can be okay too," he explained gently, beart cracking slightly at the dribbling tears.

"Duh--da--ad I *cant* it wont sta--st--*op*," leo cried, almost pleading. He didnt know what he wanted, what he could do to make it better. He just wanted everything to stop.

"Oh my blue," splinter cooed sadly, placing a hand on the smallers forehead. "It is all up here. We are safe."

"Everyone's go--onna die an--an' i cant le--" leo cut himself off with a harsh cough, mucus collecting in his airways making him feel clogged and suffocated, like he was drowing.

Like he was dying.

"Nope," splinter countered with a gentle smile, "nobody is going to die. We are altogether and safe. You are scared because you havent rested, your mind is boosting your anxiety," he tried to explain, hoping the younger would listen to him for just a moment.

"Make it *stop*," he begged, "everything hur--hurts."

All four had manoeuvred around the crying turtle; raph was on his side, squeezing his hand and hugging him supportively. Donnie had started to get overwhelmed, stressed. His and leos emotions always bounced off of eachothers, so mikey climbed out of the bed to keep donnie okay. Splinter was crouching infront of his blue turtle, sparing a glance at his younger sons before focusing on leo specifically.

"Here," he said, reaching into the little bag he had brought in with him. "Pain medication," he pointed to the one pill shaped more like an oval, "anxiety medication," he pointed to another, this one being more of a capsule shape, "and sleep medication," he said finally, pointing to the last little circle on his palm.

"You said you were fine earlier, but you are clearly not." His tone wasnt harsh or angry, voice quiet and gentle as he held three little white pills in the palm of his hand for his son to take.

Leo looked averred at the idea, his face scrunching up as if he was *afraid* of three tiny powder tablets.

Raph squeezed his hand a little tighter, "take them. Dont be stupid."

"Raphael," splinter said lightly, gesturing for leo to take the medication.

Eventually, the blue turtle shakily reached for the pills, swallowing them without any issue despite not having water.

"Good job blue," splinter praised, smiling comfortingly. "Now lie down and just keep breathing, the pain will go away soon," he promised tenderly, helping the boy lie down so he didnt aggrivate qny injuries too much.

Raph went to move off the bed onto the floor, but leo squeezed his hand, looking at him with pleading eyes.

The red turtle was confused at first, but then he understood.

'I don't wan't you to die'

So he climbed back into the bed, surprised but willing when leo snuggled close, resting his head in his brothers lap, his delirious and upset brain just wanting comfort and closeness.

He hiccuped and cried for while after, occasional quiet murmurs of his thoughts spewing out of his mouth. Mikey and donnie sat at the end of the bed, both their hands on one part of his body just to prove they were still there.

Eventually though, leo stopped crying, body slumping and eyes dropping tiredly. His grip on raphs hand weakened, and he yawned.

"M' sorry..." he mumbled sleepily, gaze locked on nothing in particular.

"Shut the fu--"

"Its okay leo!" donnie quickly interupted, sending the red turtle a glare. "We're not angry."

"I's 'o s'upid," he slurred, face pressed against raphs thigh and exhaustion weighing him down. "M s'upid... i's all my faul'..."

"You're not stupid bro," mikey immediately countered, voice light and airy, "and nothings your fault. Promise." He kept his sentences short, because there was a good chance that leo was so out of it that he wouldnt even remember this conversation.

The blue turtle hummed lowly, body going completely slack and breathing evening itself out now that he could no longer keep his eyelids from drooping shut.

They all sighed with relief when they realised he was asleep, both the younger two vacating back to their own beds like their dad had done earlier.

Raph didnt move, slouching a little so he was comfortable and watching his twin as he slept soundly for the first time since the invasion.

End Notes

hope you enjoyed! i know sleepless nights fics are usually 2k12 leo but this headcanon just matched the series so i thought why not. its a little shorter, but i still hope you enjoyed.

comment your thoughts!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!